

DH/143

NO MAN LIVETH TO HIMSELF.

A 1509/1109

S E R M O N

Preached before an Assembly of

Protestant Dissenting-Ministers,

Of the COUNTIES of LANCASTER and CHESTER,

Met at MANCHESTER, May 16, 1764,

To carry into Execution a SCHEME for the

Relief of their Widows and Children;

And published at their Request.

By JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

TUTOR in the LANGUAGES and BELLES LETTRES

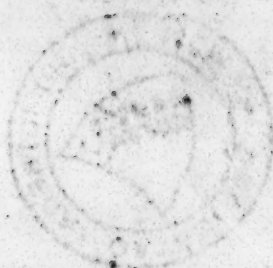
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T O T H E

WIVES of the DISSENTING-
MINISTERS in the Counties
of LANCASTER and
CHESTER, particularly
those who are most interest-
ed in the Fund which is at
present establishing for the
Relief of Ministers' Widows.

Worthy Ladies,

TO ease your minds of the greatest anxiety they are subject to is the object of the scheme with a view to which this Sermon was composed; it was a feeling for your situation that dictated the composition; and, therefore, I think I may not improperly inscribe it to you. And I think myself happy in so fair an opportunity of addressing myself to persons whose characters and conduct are in a variety of lights so truly respectable,
a and

ii DEDICATION.

and which so justly entitle you to the esteem and gratitude of the best friends of society and of mankind.

YOURS, Ladies, is the merit to have chosen to connect yourselves with men engaged in the glorious cause of religious liberty, though exposed to great temporal disadvantages, and such as must necessarily be felt chiefly by yourselves, in preference to what are generally reckoned more advantageous alliances.

YOURS has been the courage to enter into a condition full of cares, and attended with great expence, in the certain prospect of a scanty and precarious subsistence, and in a luxurious and expensive age.

AND, which is more, yours is the magnanimity to persevere with chearful assiduity in the discharge of all the conjugal and parental offices, and in educating a family in the principles of virtue, religion, and good manners, very often amidst the rigours of poverty without



DEDICATION. iii

without the resources of it, as it is obliged to be concealed under the appearance of ease and plenty; and when the greatest frugality is barely sufficient that every day provide for the things of itself, without its being in your power to lay up any thing against a time of still greater extremity. And, in making an estimate of true greatness of mind, it ought to be considered, that no effort of an hour or a day can be compared to a series of efforts continued through a whole life.

YOUR part it is to contrive how, with that little which is in a manner but sufficient for a bare subsistence, to make that reputable appearance which your situation renders necessary, in an age in which hardly any thing but what is attended with considerable expence can look reputable.

IT must be your constant endeavour, therefore (and it must be extremely painful to persons of your liberal disposition) to restrain your own natural generosity

iv DEDICATION.

sity and to second the same laudable, and perhaps more difficult efforts in your husbands, unaccustomed to the cares of this world. And this must all be done in such a manner, that though the effects of your generosity be in a great measure restrained, the disposition may, notwithstanding, be very conspicuous.

YOUR part it also is to support the minds of those of your partners who are apt to be too thoughtful; when they are desponding under present straits, and the more affecting prospect of the greater future difficulties which may be reserved for you.

YOUR part it is to inculcate upon the minds of your children maxims of moderation, humility, and low expectations in life, in opposition to the daily influences of the appearance they make and the company they keep. And how difficult the task, to instill into them, at the same time, sentiments becoming the poverty, the virtue, and the enlarged generous disposition of their parents!

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DEDICATION. v

IT is also the part of your wisdom to teach them, or get them instructed (especially your daughters) in those arts by which they may be enabled to procure themselves a decent provision by the labour of their own hands, at the same time that they must be educated in such a manner as to be proper companions for those who live by the labour of others.

AND this attention must constantly be given to other persons, and given with cheerfulness, so as to keep up the spirits of others, in circumstances in which it is very extraordinary that you should bear up your own minds.

NOTHING but the principles of virtue and religion can effectually support your minds under your peculiar difficulties, notwithstanding several circumstances in your situation wear a favourable aspect. A multiplicity of family cares, as they constitute your anxiety, must, in some measure, constitute your joys too; the pleasure you receive from your children must often be as exquisite as your concern for them; and the conversation and
b friendship

vi DEDICATION.

friendship of an inseparable companion, the object of your esteem, to whom you can unbosom your griefs, and in whose love and affection you can confide, are, in some measure, an hourly charm against the hourly disquietudes of your lives. But, above all, the many opportunities which you enjoy of the best lessons of patience, fortitude, resignation, and trust in God must make those virtues, which are the only sovereign antidote for all the evils of life, familiar to your minds.

MAY you go on, worthy Ladies, in acting a part to which those of your sex who are devoted to the gay enchanting levities of this world, and whose happiness you need not envy, are unequal; and which all their admired spirit and vivacity would not enable them to support.

MAY you go on to show one of the greatest examples which the theatre of this world affords, of all the personal, social, and divine virtues: may you receive all the natural reward of your exalted disposition in this world, and shine with a superiour lustre in a higher sphere,

DEDICATION. vii

sphere, for which your extraordinary trials and extraordinary virtues have formed you in a lower.

IN the mean time, Ladies, we shall endeavour to give your worthy minds a less obstructed field for the exertion and display of your virtues, by removing part of the anxiety you lie under, and providing an additional and encouraging motive to your frugality, in making it more effectual; and useful, not only for the present, but possibly in future time, when your circumstances, being more straitned, your frugality will less avail you.

THE same principles which have carried you hitherto, and which support you under your present difficulties, are, I doubt not, abundantly sufficient to support you under those greater difficulties. Your children, educated in the fear of God, and in the principles of integrity, industry, and filial piety, though they fill no distinguished stations in this world, will be a perpetual source of comfort and satisfaction, and perhaps of relief to you, who have been the means of forming
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such truly valuable, though not illustrious members of society. And that Almighty Being, who hath stiled himself *the father of the fatherless and the widows' God*, has promised, that, *as their day is, so shall be the strength of all them that put their trust in him.*

THAT this day of your greater tribulation may never arrive, or, if it do await you, be as late as possible, and that the presence and good providence of that God in whom you and your husbands trust may make his grace sufficient for you, when it does arrive, is the sincere prayer of,

Worthy LADIES,

Your most devoted,

And most humble Servant,

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.



ROMANS xiv. 7.

FOR NONE OF US LIVETH TO HIMSELF,
AND NO MAN DIETH TO HIMSELF.

IT is the excellence of our rational nature that by it we are capable of living to some known end, and of governing our lives and conduct by some rule; whereas brute creatures necessarily live and act at random, just as the present appetite influences them. Let us then, my brethren, make the most of this our prerogative, by proposing to ourselves the noblest end of human life, and engaging in such a course of actions as will reflect the greatest honour upon our nature, and be productive of the most solid and lasting happiness, both in the performance and the review of them.

AGREEABLE to this, let the principal use we make of our understanding be to discover what the great end of life is; and then let us use the resolution and fortitude that is either natural to us, or acquired by us, in steadily conforming ourselves to it.

BUT as the regular investigation of the rule of life from the light of nature only may be tedious and perhaps at last unsatisfactory, let us, without
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waiting for the result of such an inquiry upon the principles of reason, take a more clear and sure guide, the holy scriptures, in so important a subject, and see, afterwards, whether reason and experience will not give their sanction to that decision.

THE great end of human life is negatively expressed by the apostle Paul in my text. *None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself;* and, if we attend to the connection of these words, we shall find what, in the apostles idea, is the true end to which men ought to live.

THE apostle is here treating of a controversy which had arisen in the christian church about the lawfulness of eating meat sacrificed to idols, and keeping holy certain days, together with some other ceremonious observances, and exhorting both parties to do nothing that might give offence, or be a snare to the other; lest, by their means, any one should perish for whom Christ died.

As the best foundation for mutual tenderness and charity, he reminds them that both parties acted, with regard to all ritual observances, as they imagined was the will of Christ. *He that observeth a day, observeth it to the Lord; and he that observeth not a day, to the Lord he observeth it not.* And after giving his sanction in the fullest manner to this maxim, and deciding, with respect to this particular case, that all christians ought to act according to the will of Christ, and consult the good and the peace of their fellow christians, he declares in general, that *no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself; but whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we die*



die unto the Lord; that is, in all our actions, our views should not be directed to ourselves, but to the interest of our holy religion. And as the christian religion has for its object the happiness of mankind; since, *Christ came to bless us in turning us away from our iniquities*; it is the same thing as if he had said, The great scope of all our conduct should be the real welfare of all to whom our influence can extend.

WE should, therefore, my brethren, according to this apostolical maxim, by no means confine our regards to ourselves; and have our own pleasure, profit, or advantage in view in every thing we undertake; but look out of, and beyond ourselves, and take a generous concern in the happiness of all our brethren of mankind; make their sorrows our sorrows, their joys our joys and their happiness our pursuit: and it is in this disinterested conduct, and in this only, that we shall find our own true happiness.

THAT this is the true rule of human life, will appear, whether we consider the course of nature without us, the situation of mankind in this world, or take a nearer view of the principles of human nature. And we shall likewise find, that several considerations drawn from the holy scriptures will farther confirm and illustrate this maxim of human conduct which was first suggested by them.

I. THIS disinterested conduct of man is most agreeable to the course of nature without us. There is no part of the creation but if viewed attentively will expose the selfishness and narrow mindedness of men. For among all that infinite variety of things and creatures which present themselves

selves to our view, not one of them appears to have been made merely for itself, but every thing bears a relation to something else. They can hardly be said to afford any matter for contemplation singly, and are most of all the objects of our admiration when considered as connected with other things. The primary uses of things are few, but the secondary uses of every thing are almost infinite. Indeed the secondary uses of things are so many, that we are lost in the multiplicity of them, whereas we can give no answer, if we be asked what is the primary use of any thing, but this general one, which will equally suit every thing, that every creature which is capable of happiness was made to enjoy that share of it which is suited to its nature.

Now what do we mean when we say that the several parts of nature are adapted to one another, but that they are made for the use of one another. I shall mention only a few of these mutual relations and uses, beginning with those parts of nature which are the most remote from one another and whose mutual relations and uses are the least obvious, and so proceed to those in which they are more obvious. The sun, the moon, the planets, and comets are strictly connected and combined into one system. Each body, though so exceedingly remote from the rest, is admirably adapted by its situation, magnitude, and velocity in its orbit to the state of the whole, in those respects, and many others. This connection, probably, also extends to the remotest bodies in the universe: so that it is impossible to say, that the withdrawing of any one would not in some respect or other affect all the rest.

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THE clouds and the rain are designed to moisten the earth, and the sun to warm it; and the texture and juices of the earth are formed so as to receive the genial influences of both, in order to ripen and bring to perfection that infinite variety of plants and fruits, the seeds of which are deposited in it. Again is not each plant peculiarly adapted to its proper soil and climate, so that every country is furnished with those productions which are peculiarly suited to it? Are not all plants likewise suited to the various kinds of animals which feed upon them? so that, though they enjoy a kind of life peculiar to themselves, and all the influences they are exposed to be adapted to promote that life, they themselves are as much adapted to maintain that higher kind of life which is enjoyed by creatures of the animal nature.

THE various kinds of animals are, again, in a thousand ways adapted to, and formed for the use of one another. Beasts of a fiercer nature prey upon the tamer cattle: fishes of a larger size live almost wholly upon those of a less: and there are some birds which prey upon land animals, others upon fishes, and others upon creatures of their own species.

THAT brute animals are excellently adapted to the use of man, and were, therefore, made to be subservient to the use of man, man will not deny. The strength of some, and the sagacity of others are as much at our command, and are as effectually employed for our use, as if they belonged to ourselves. We can even turn to our advantage every passion of their nature; so that we can safely repose the greatest confidence in many
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of them. They are the guardians of our possessions and of our lives. They even enter into our resentments, and, at our instigation, take part in our revenge.

HAVING now advanced to man, the chief of this lower creation, and shown that all creatures of the vegetable, and merely animal nature live and die for his use; pride might bid us here break off the chain of mutual relations and uses which we have been pursuing thus far, and leave man in the enjoyment of his superiority; but beside that it is contrary to the analogy of nature in which we see nothing but what has innumerable secondary relations and uses, that man only should be made for himself;

II. THE situation of man in this world, or the external circumstances of human nature still oblige us to assert, with St. Paul, that *no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself*. Man himself is but a link, tho' the highest link of this great chain, all the parts of which are closely connected by the hand of our divine author. Nay, the more various and extensive are our powers, either for action or enjoyment, on that very account, the more multiplied and extensive are our wants: so that, at the same time that they are marks of our superiority to, they are bonds of our connection with, and signs of our dependance upon the various parts of the world around us, and of our subservience to one another.

IN fact, every time that we gratify any of our senses, tho' it be in consequence of the exertion of our own powers, we are reminded (if we will be so just to ourselves as to take the hint) of our dependance

dependance upon something without us: for the means of our gratification are, in all cases, evidently without ourselves.

IF we be served by the vegetables and the animals which this earth affords, we are obliged, in our turn, to favour their propagation, to promote their cultivation, and to preserve them in a healthy and vigorous state; and employment of this kind doth, in fact, take up a great part of our attention and labour. We must make the creature in some measure happy, if we would be effectually served by it. And the attention which domestic animals give to us, and their anxiety for us is not to be compared to the attention we bestow on them, and the anxiety we undergo on their account.

BUT my subject leads me to attend to the connection which man has with man, rather than with the inferior part of the creation; tho' it seemed not improper to point out that. In general, nothing can be more obvious than the mutual dependance of mankind on one another, we see it in the most barbarous countries, where the connections of mankind are the fewest and the slightest. This dependance is more sensible, indeed, in a state of infancy, when the least remission of the care of others would be fatal to us; but it is as real and necessary, and even vastly more extensive, tho' less striking, when we are more advanced in life, especially in civilized countries. And the more perfect is the state of civil society, the more various and extended are the connections which man has with man, and the less able is he to subsist comfortably without the help of others.

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THE business of human life, where it is enjoyed in perfection, is subdivided into so many parts, each of which is executed by different hands, that a person who would reap the benefit of all the arts of life in perfection must employ, and consequently be dependant upon, thousands: he must even be under obligations to numbers of whom he has not the least knowledge.

THESE connections of man with man are every day growing more extensive. The most distant parts of the earth are now connected: every part is every day growing still more necessary to every other part. And the nearer advances we make to general happiness, and the more commodious our circumstances in this world are made for us, the more intimately and extensively we become connected with, and the more closely dependant upon one another.

By thus tracing the progress of man to that state of happiness which he now enjoys, we may be led to think, that, in pursuing it still farther, to a more happy state of being, adapted to our social natures, we shall find ourselves still more variously and intimately connected with, and more closely dependant upon one another: which affords a far nobler and more pleasing prospect to a person of an enlarged mind, and of a social and benevolent disposition, than he could have from supposing that, after death, all our mutual connections will be broken, and every good man be made transcendently happy within himself, having no intercourse, or at least necessary intercourse, with any being beside his maker.

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By these arguments, which are drawn from facts that are obvious to every person who attends to the external circumstances of mankind, it is plain that no man can live of himself; and even that the rich are in fact more dependant upon others than the poor: for, having more wants, they have occasion for more, and more frequent supplies. Now it will easily be allowed, that every reason why we cannot live of ourselves is an argument why we ought not to live to ourselves: for certainly no person receives an obligation, but he ought to confer one. Every connection must, in some measure, be mutual. And indeed the circulation of good offices would in a great measure cease, if the passage were not as open, and as free from obstruction in one part of the common channel as another. The rich, if they would receive the greatest advantages from society, must contribute to the happiness of it. If they act upon different maxims, and think to avail themselves of the pleasures of society without promoting the good of it, they will never know the true pleasures of society. And, in the end, they will be found to have enjoyed the least themselves, who have least contributed to the enjoyment of others.

THUS it appears, from a view of the external circumstances of mankind, that man was not made to live to himself. The same truth may be inferred,

III. FROM a nearer inspection of the principles of human nature, and the springs of human actions.

IF any man look into himself, and consider the springs and motives of his own actions, he will find that there are principles in his nature which would be of no use were the intercourse he has with his
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fellow creatures cut off : for that both the efficient and final causes of their operations are without himself. They are views of mankind and their situations which call those principles into action. And if we trace the operation of them we shall clearly see that, though they be strictly connected with private happiness, their ultimate and proper object is the happiness of society.

WHAT other account can we give of that impulse which we all, more or less, feel for society? and whence is that restless and painful dissatisfaction which a man feels when he is long excluded from it, but that, in such a solitary condition, his faculties have not their proper exercise, and he is, as it were, out of his proper element?

WHENCE is that quick sensibility which we are conscious of, with respect to both the joys and the sorrows of our fellow creatures, if their happiness or misery were a matter of indifference to us? Can we feel what is sometimes called the contagion of the passions, when we find that our minds contract a kind of gloom and heaviness in the company of the melancholy, and that this melancholy vanishes in company which is innocently chearful, and question the influence of social connections? Much less can the reality or the power of the social principle be doubted when a fellow creature in distress calls forth the most exquisite feelings of compassion, attended with instant and strong efforts towards his relief.

So essential a part of our nature are these social passions, that it is impossible for any man living wholly to escape the influence of them, but if we would be witness of their strongest effects, and see them

them branched out into that beautiful subordination which corresponds to all the varieties of our mutual relations, we must look into domestick life. There we shall clearly see that the most frequent and almost the only cause of a man's joys and sorrows are the joys and sorrows of others, and that the immediate aim of all his actions is the well being and happiness of others.

Doth not the sense of honour in the human breast derive all its force from the influence which social connections have over us? Of what use could it be but to beings formed for society? What do we infer from our dread of infamy, and from our being so strongly actuated by a passion for fame, and also from the universality and extent of this principle, but that our nature obliges us to keep up a regard to others in our whole conduct, and that the author of nature intended we should? And is it not a farther evidence of the ultimate design of this principle, that, in general, the means of being distinguished, at least of gaining a solid and lasting reputation among men, is to be useful to mankind; publick utility being the most direct road to true fame.

EVERY noble and exalted faculty of our nature is either directly of a social nature, or tends to strengthen the social principle. Nothing can be more evident than that the dictates of conscience strongly enforce the practice of benevolence: and the pleasures of benevolence certainly constitute the greatest part of those pleasures which we refer to the moral sense. They must necessarily do so, while the foundation of all virtue and right conduct is the happiness of society: for then every re-

fection that we have done our duty, must be the same thing as a reflection that we have contributed what was in our power to the good of our fellow creatures.

LASTLY, of what doth devotion itself consist, but the exercise of the social affections? What are the dispositions of our minds which are called forth into action in private or publick prayer, but reverence for true greatness, humility, gratitude, love, and confidence in God, as the greatest and best of beings; qualities of the most admirable use and effect in social life.

I MAY add that not only are the highest and the worthiest principles of human conduct either truly social, or a reinforcement of the social principle, but even the lowest appetites and passions of our nature are far from being indifferent to social connections, considerations, and influences. That the pleasures we receive from the fine arts, as those of music, poetry, and painting, and the like, are enjoyed but very imperfectly except in company is very evident to all persons who have the least taste for those pleasures. I may even venture to say that there is hardly a voluptuary, the most devoted to the pleasures of the table, but indulges himself with more satisfaction in company than alone.

HAVING given this general view of the social turn of our whole natures; whereby we are continually led out of ourselves in our pursuit of happiness; I shall now consider, further, how all our appetites and passions, which are the springs of all our actions, do in their own nature tend to lead us out of ourselves, and how much
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our happiness depends upon our keeping their proper objects in view, and upon our minds being thereby constantly engaged upon something foreign to themselves; after which I shall shew what are the fittest objects thus to engage our attention.

IN order to preserve mutual connection, dependance, and harmony among all his works, it has pleased our divine author to appoint, that all our appetites and desires, to whatever sense, external or internal, they be referred, should point to something beyond ourselves for their gratification; so that the idea of self is not in the least necessary to a state of the highest enjoyment.

WHEN may men be said to be happy, but when their faculties are properly exercised in the pursuit of those things which give them pleasure. I say the pursuit rather than the enjoyment, not because enjoyment makes no part of our happiness; but because the vigorous and agreeable sensations with which our minds are impressed during the pursuit of a favourite object are generally, at least in this life, of vastly more consideration. The pleasure we receive the instant we arrive at the height of our wishes may be more exquisite, but the others are of much longer continuance; and, immediately upon the gratification of any of our desires, the mind is instantly reaching after some new object.

SUPPOSING now the mind of any person to be fully and constantly engaged in the pursuit of a proper object, to the possession of which he is sensible he every day makes nearer approaches, and his desires be not so eager as to make him uneasy during the pursuit, what more is requisite to make him as happy as his nature can bear? He will

will not be the less happy because the object he is in pursuit of is foreign to himself; nor would it make him any happier to have the idea of its contributing to his happiness. Nay it may be shown, that it were better for us, in general, with respect to real enjoyment, never to have the idea of the relation which the objects of our pursuit bear to ourselves: and this is most of all evident with respect to the higher pleasures of our nature, from which we derive our greatest happiness.

OUR benevolence, for instance, leads us immediately to relieve and oblige others. Pleasure, indeed, always attends generous actions, and is consequent upon them; but the satisfaction we receive in our minds from having done kind offices to others is far less pure, and less perfectly enjoyed, if at all, when we had this, or any other private gratification in view before the action.

IN like manner, he who courts applause, and does worthy actions solely with a view to obtain it, can have no knowledge of the genuine pleasure arising either from the good action itself; or the applause that is given to it: because he is sensible, in his own mind, that if those persons who praise his conduct were acquainted with the real motive of it, and knew that he meant nothing more, by his pretended acts of piety and benevolence, than to gain their applause, they would be so far from admiring and commending, that they would despise him for it.

IT is evident, for the same reason, that no person can enjoy the applause of his own mind, on the account of any action which he did with a view
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to gain it. The pleasures of a good conscience, or, as they are sometimes called, those of the moral sense, cannot be enjoyed but by a person who steadily obeys the dictates of his conscience, and uniformly acts the part which he thinks to be right, without any view to the pleasure and self-satisfaction which may arise from it.

THE idea of self, as it is not adapted to gratify any of our appetites, and can contribute nothing towards their gratification, can only occasion anxiety, fear, and distrust about our happiness, when it is frequently the subject of our thoughts. The apprehension and dread of misery (which is certainly the occasion of most of the real trouble and misery of men in this life) is beyond measure increased from this source: and the effects of it are most sensibly felt both in the lesser and greater scenes of our lives.

IT is chiefly an anxious solicitude about ourselves, and the appearance we shall make in the eyes of others, which is the cause of that affectation and constraint in behaviour which is so troublesome to a person's self, and so ridiculous in the eyes of others. This trifling remark, being so frequently verified, may serve to show that these sentiments are by no means merely speculative; but that they enter into the daily scenes of active life. Indeed they are in the highest sense practical, and upon them depend those maxims of conduct, which contain the great secret of human happiness, and which are confirmed by every day's experience.

THAT the idea of self frequently occurring to our minds in our pursuit of happiness is often a
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real and great obstruction to it, will be more obvious from a short series of plain facts and examples, which I shall therefore mention.

WHY are brute creatures, in general, so contented and happy in their low sphere of life, and much more so than the mind of man could be in their situation? Is it not because their views are perpetually fixed upon some object within their reach, adapted to their desires; and that the abstract idea of self, together with the notion of their being in the pursuit of happiness, and liable to be disappointed in that pursuit, never comes in their way, to interrupt the uniform and pleasureable exertion of their faculties in the pursuit of their proper objects.

THE days of our infancy are happy for the same reason, notwithstanding the imperfection of our faculties, and the greater proportion of pains and disorders we are then liable to. Those years of our lives slide away in unmixed enjoyment; except when they are interrupted by the actual sensations of pain: for we are then incapable of suffering any thing from the fear of evil. It is not till after a considerable time that we get the abstract idea of self; an idea, which the brutes, probably, never arrive at, and which is of excellent use to us, as will be shown in its proper place, in our pursuit of happiness; but is often abused to the great increase of our misery, as will appear by the facts we are now considering.

Why are persons whose situation in life obliges them to constant labour, either of body or mind, generally more happy than those whose circumstances do not lay them under a necessity to labour,
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and whose own inclination does not lead them to it; but because the former have their thoughts constantly employed in the pursuit of some end, which keeps their faculties awake, and fully exerted? And this is always attended with a state of vigorous, and consequently pleasurable sensations. Persons thus employed have not much leisure to attend to the idea of self, and that anxiety which always attends the frequent recurring of it; whereas a person who has no object foreign to himself, which constantly and necessarily engages his attention, cannot have his faculties fully exerted; and therefore his mind cannot possibly be in that state of vigorous sensation in which happiness consists.

THE mind of such a person, having nothing without him sufficient to engage his attention, turns upon itself. He feels he is not happy, but he sees not the reason of it. This again excites his wonder, vexation, and perplexity. He tries new expedients: but as these are only temporary, and generally whimsical choices; none of them have sufficient power to fix and confine his attention. He is still perpetually thinking about himself, and wondering and uneasy that he is not happy. This anxious perplexed state of mind, affecting the nervous system necessarily occasions a more irritable state of the nerves, and of the brain, which makes the unhappy person subject to more frequent alarms, to greater anxiety and distress than before; till, these mental and bodily disorders mutually increasing one another, his condition is at length the most wretched and distressing that can be conceived. No bodily pain, no rack, no torture can equal the misery and distress of a human being whose mind

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is thus a prey to itself. No wonder that, in this situation, many persons wish the utter extinction of their being, and often put a period to their lives.

THIS is certainly the most deplorable situation to which a human being can be reduced in this world, and is doubly the object of our compassion, when the disorder has its seat originally in the body, in such a manner, that no endeavours to engage a man's thoughts upon other objects can force his attention from himself.

IT is no wonder that we see more of this kind of unhappiness in the higher ranks of life, and among persons who are in what is called easy circumstances than in any other. Indeed, the case is hardly possible in any other than in easy circumstances. For did a man's circumstances really find constant employment for his thoughts, were his business so urgent as to leave him no leisure for suspense and uncertainty what to do, it is plain, from the preceeding principles, that such anxiety and distress could not take place. It is well known that the mind suffers more in a state of uncertainty and suspense, for want of some motive to determine a man's choice, than he can suffer in the most vigorous prosecution of the most arduous undertaking. I appeal to men of leisure, and particularly to persons who are naturally of an active and enterprising disposition for the truth of this fact.

THESE principles likewise, as is evident without entering into a detail of particulars, furnish us with a good reason why we generally see fathers and mothers of large families infinitely more easy, chearful, and happy, than those persons who have
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no family-connections. The greater affluence, ease, and variety of pleasures which these can command (subject to the inconveniences I have mentioned, and which are commonly visible enough in the case I refer to) are a poor equivalent for the necessary constant, and vigorous exertion of their faculties, and consequently the strong sensations and lively enjoyments which a variety of family cares, conjugal and parental tenderness supply for the others.

THIS would be the case universally, where large families could subsist, if the parents had sufficient employment, and if an early acquired taste for superfluities, had not taken too deep root in their minds.

HAPPY is it for the world, and a great mark of the wisdom and goodness of divine providence, that men's minds are so constituted, that though they be in easy circumstances, they are never completely satisfied. The passions of most men are still engaging them in a variety of pursuits, in which they are as eager, and which they prosecute with as much alacrity and earnestness, as if necessity compelled them to it. Otherwise every person who could live easy would be inevitably miserable.

INFINITELY happier would it be for themselves, and for the world, if all their pursuits were such as would give them satisfaction upon reflection as well as in the pursuit, and be of real advantage to the rest of mankind; which two circumstances never fail to coincide. However, with regard to a person's self in this life, any end is unspeakably better than no end at all; and such is the wise appointment of providence, that bad ends tend, in a

variety of ways, to check and defeat themselves, and to throw the minds of men into better, nobler, and more satisfactory pursuits. A consideration, which cannot fail to suggest, to a benevolent and pious mind, a prospect of a future happy and glorious state of things.

It may be said, that if happiness consist in, or depend upon the exertion of our faculties upon some object foreign to ourselves, it is a matter of indifference what the object be. I answer, that during the pursuit it is nearly so, and universal experience, I imagine, will justify the observation. This is the reason why we see men equally eager, and equally happy in the pursuit of a variety of things which appear trifling to one another. Thus the florist, the medalist, the critic, the antiquary, and every adept in the minuter branches of science, all enjoy equal happiness in the pursuit of their several objects; and as much as the historian, the astronomer, the moralist, or the divine, who refers his nobler studies to no higher end, and to whom they only serve as an exercise of his faculties.

BUT though any eager pursuit tends to keep the mind in a state of vigorous and lively sensations, that pursuit only can give us the *maximum*, the highest possible degree of happiness, which has the following characters. It must be attended with the probability of success, consequently it must be generally successful; and it must also terminate in such gratifications as are least inconsistent with themselves, or with the other gratifications of which our nature makes us capable. And it may be demonstrated (though I shall not undertake to do it particularly in this place) that no pursuits answer
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to this description but those in which the love of mankind, the love of God, or the dictates of conscience engage us.

FOR in all other pursuits, such as those of sensual pleasure, the pleasures of imagination, and ambition, we are liable to frequent disappointments; the gratifications in which they terminate are inconsistent with themselves, and with each other; and they almost intirely deaden and disqualify the mind for the nobler pleasures of our natures. It is the love of God, the love of mankind, and a sense of duty which engage the minds of men in the noblest of all pursuits. By these we are carried on with increasing alacrity and satisfaction. Even the pains and distresses in which we involve ourselves by these courses are preferable to the pleasures attending the gratification of our lower appetites.

BESIDES these noble pursuits, generally at least, allow us even more of the lower gratifications of our nature than can be obtained by a direct pursuit of them. For a little experience will inform us, that we receive the most pleasure from these lower appetites of our nature, as well as from the highest sources of pleasure we are capable of, when we have their gratification least of all in view. There can be no doubt, for instance, but that the labourer who eats and drinks merely to satisfy the calls of hunger and thirst has vastly more pleasure in eating and drinking than the Epicure who studies the pleasing of his palate.

THEY are the pleasures of benevolence and piety which most effectually carry us out of ourselves; whereas every other inferior pursuit suggests

gests to us, in a thousand respects, the idea of self, the unseasonable intervention of which may be called the worm which lies at the root of all human blifs. And never can we be completely happy, till we *love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength; and our neighbour as ourselves.*

This is the christian self-annihilation, and a state of the most complete happiness to which our natures can attain; when without having the least idea of being in the pursuit of our own happiness, our faculties are wholly absorbed in those noble and exalted pursuits, in which we are sure not to be finally disappointed, and in the course of which we enjoy all the consistent pleasures of our whole nature. When, rejoicing with all that rejoice, weeping with all that weep, and intimately associating the idea of GOD, the maker of all things, our father and our friend, with all the works of his hands, and all the dispensations of his providence, we constantly triumph in the comfortable sense of the divine presence and approbation, and in the transporting prospect of advancing every day nearer to the accomplishment of his glorious purposes for the happiness of his creatures.

If this be the proper and supreme happiness of man, it may be asked of what use is the principle of self-interest. I answer, that though an attention to it be inconsistent with pure unmixed happiness, yet a moderate attention to it is of excellent use in our progress towards it. It serves as a scaffold to a noble and glorious edifice, though it be unworthy of standing as any part of it. It is
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of more particular use to check and restrain the indulgence of our lower appetites and passions, before other objects and motives have acquired a sufficient power over us. But though we ought, therefore, to exhort those persons who are immersed in sensuality and gross vices, to abandon those indulgencies out of a regard to their true interest, it is advisable to withdraw this motive by degrees. However as we shall never arrive at absolute perfection, we necessarily must, and indeed ought to be influenced by it more or less through the whole course of our existence, only less and less perpetually.

THE principle of self interest may be regarded as a medium between, the lower and the higher principles of our nature, and therefore of principal use in our transition, as we may call it, from an imperfect to a more perfect state.

PERHAPS the following view of this subject may be the easiest to us. A regard to our greatest happiness must necessarily govern our conduct with respect to all those virtues which are termed private virtues, as temperance, chastity, and every branch of self government; but it always does harm as a motive to the social virtues. When, therefore, self government, which is our first step towards happiness, is established; we ought to endeavour to actuate men by higher and nobler motives: for, with regard to all those virtues, the ultimate object of which is not private happiness, an attention to self interest is of manifest prejudice to us, and this through the whole course of our lives, imperfect as we are, and as much occasion as we have for every effectual motive to virtue.

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WE are now come, in the last place, to see what considerations drawn from the holy scriptures, will farther confirm and illustrate this maxim of human conduct which was first suggested by them.

THAT the scriptures join the voice of all nature around us, informing man that he is not made for himself, that they inculcate the same lesson which we learn both from a view of the external circumstances of mankind, and also from a nearer inspection of the principles of human nature, will be evident whether we consider the object of the religion they exhibit (that is the temper to which we are intended to be formed by it) or the motives by which it is enforced and recommended to us in them.

THAT the end and design of our holy religion, christians, was to form us to the most disinterested benevolence cannot be doubted by any person who consults the holy scriptures, and especially the books of the new testament.

THERE we plainly see the principle of benevolence represented, when it is in its due strength and degree, as equal in point of intenseness to that of self-love. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.* The plain consequence of this is, that if all our brethren of mankind with whom we are connected have an equal claim upon us (since our connections are daily growing more extensive, and we ourselves are consequently growing daily of less relative importance in our own eyes) the principle of benevolence must in the end absolutely swallow up that of self-love.

THE most exalted devotion, as even superior both to self-love and benevolence, is always every where recommended to us: and the sentiments of devotion

devotion have been shown greatly to aid, and, in fact, to be the same with those of benevolence: and they must be so, unless it can be shown that we have some senses, powers, or faculties which respect the DEITY only.

IN order to determine men to engage in a course of disinterested and generous actions, every motive which is calculated to work upon human nature is employed. And as mankind in general are deeply immersed in vice and folly, their hopes, but more especially their fears are acted upon in the strongest manner by the prospect of rewards and punishments. Even temporal rewards and punishments are proposed to mankind in the earlier and ruder ages of the world; but as our notions of happiness grow more enlarged, infinitely greater, but indefinite objects of hope and fear are set before us. Something unknown, but something unspeakably dreadful in a future world is perpetually held before us, as a guard against the allurements to vice and excess which the world abounds with. And still farther to counteract their baleful influences, the heavenly world (the habitation of good men after death) is represented to us as a place in which we shall be completely happy, enjoying something which is described as more than eye hath seen, ear heard, or than the heart of man can conceive.

THESE motives are certainly addressed to the principle of self-interest, urging us out of a regard to ourselves, and our general happiness, *to cease to do evil, and learn to do well.* And, indeed, no motives of a more generous nature, and drawn from more distant considerations can be supposed

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sufficient to influence the bulk of mankind, and *bring them from the power of sin and Satan unto God.*

BUT when, by the influence of these motives, it may be supposed that mankind are in some measure recovered from the grosser pollutions of the world, and the principle of self-interest has been played, as it were, against itself, and been a means of engaging us in a course and habit of actions which are necessarily connected with, and productive of more generous and noble principles, then these nobler principles the sacred writers never fail to act upon.

NOTHING is more frequent with the sacred writers than to exhort men to the practice of their duty as the command of GOD, from a principle of love to GOD, of love to Christ, and of love to mankind, more especially of our fellow christians; and from a regard to the interest of our holy religion. Motives which do not at all turn the attention of our minds upon themselves. This is not borrowing the aid of self-love to strengthen the principles of benevolence and piety, but it is properly deriving additional strength to these noble dispositions, as it were, from within themselves, independent of foreign considerations.

WE may safely say that no degree or kind of self-love is made use of in the scriptures but what is necessary to raise us above that principle. And some of the more refined kinds of self-love, how familiar soever they may be in some systems of morals, never come in sight there. We are never exhorted in the scriptures to do benevolent actions for the sake of the reflex pleasures of benevolence,
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or, pious actions with a view to the pleasures of devotion. This refined kind of self-love is nowhere to be found in the scriptures.

EVEN the pleasures of a good conscience, though they be of a more general nature, and there be less refinement in them than in some other pleasures which are connected with the idea of self, and though they be represented in the scriptures as the consequence of good actions, and a source of joy, as a testimony of a person's being in the favour of God, and in the way to happiness, are perhaps never directly proposed to us as the reward of virtue. This motive to virtue makes a greater figure in the system of the later stoics (those heathen philosophers who, in consequence of entertaining the most extravagant idea of their own merit, really idolized their own natures, to a degree absolutely blasphemous) than in the scriptures. And if we consider the nature of this principle we shall soon be sensible that if it be inculcated as a motive to virtue, and particularly the virtues of a sublimer kind, it should be with great caution, and in such a manner as shall have the least tendency to encourage self applause. For does not self applause border very nearly upon pride and self conceit, and that species of it which is called spiritual pride, and which is certainly a most malignant disposition.

IF this same principle have power to excite such ridiculous vanity, intolerable arrogance, inveterate rancour, and supercilious contempt of others, when it has nothing but the trifling advantage of skill in criticism, a talent for poetry a taste for the belles lettres, or some other of the minuter parts of science to avail itself of; what have we

not to dread from it, when it can boast of what is universally acknowledged to be a far superiour kind of excellence?

To guard against this dangerous rock, so fatal to every genuine principle of virtue, the utmost humility, self diffidence, and trust in God are ever recommended to us in the holy scriptures. Good men are taught to regard him as the giver of every good and every perfect gift. They are represented as disclaiming all the merit of their own good works, and expecting all favour and happiness, private or publick, from the free goodness and undeserved mercy of God. *When we have done all that is commanded us we must say we are unprofitable servants, we have done only that which it was our duty to do.*

In the representation which our Saviour has given us of the proceedings of the last great day of judgement, it is in this respect that the temper of the righteous is contrasted with that of the wicked, though that was not the principal design of the representation. The righteous seem surprized at the favourable opinion which their judge expresses of them, and absolutely disclaim all the good works which he ascribes to them. *When saw we thee, say they, an hungred, and fed thee; or thirsty and gave thee drink; when saw we thee a stranger and took thee in, or naked and cloathed thee; when saw we thee sick and in prison and came unto thee.* Whereas the wicked are represented as equally surprized at the censure our Lord passes upon them, and insist upon their innocence, saying, *When saw we thee an hungred, or thirsty,*

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or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee.

THIS too is the excellent moral conveyed to us in the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican; and the import of one of the blessings which our Lord pronounced in a solemn manner at the beginning of his ministry on earth, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*; and also the spirit of many of our Lord's invectives against the pride and hypocrisy of the scribes and pharisees.

No other vice seemeth capable of disturbing the equal and generous temper of our Lord. Other vices rather excite his compassion, but pride and vanity, together with their usual attendant hypocrisy, never fail to rouse his most vehement indignation: infomuch that before we attend to the heinous nature and dreadful consequence of those vices, we are apt rather to blame our Lord for intemperate wrath upon these occasions, and to wonder why a person who otherwise appears to be so meek should, in this case only, be so highly provoked.

How severely doth he check the least tendency towards pride and ambition in his own disciples, when ever he discovers in any of them a disposition to aspire to distinction and superiority; closing his admonition, on one remarkable occasion, with these words, which are characteristick of the temper of his religion. Mat. xxiii. 11, 12. *He that is greatest among you shall be your servant. Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

WHAT temper can be supposed more proper to qualify us for joining the glorious assembly of the
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spirits of just men made perfect, and perhaps innumerable orders of beings far superiour to us both in understanding and goodness. when all the splendour of the invisible world shall be thrown open to us, but a spirit of the deepest humility, and the purest benevolence, which alone can dispose us truly to rejoice in the view of every kind and degree of excellence wherever found, without the least uneasiness arising from pride, envy, jealousy, or dislike; all which vicious qualities of the mind are nearly connected together. And how can a spirit of true humility and pure benevolence, which cannot exist without humility, be attained, if our regards be perpetually or frequently directed to ourselves. Where self is considered, pride, vanity, or self conceit, with all their hateful consequences, seem in some degree to be unavoidable.

WHOEVER, therefore, lays the foundation of human virtue on the principle of self interest, or, what is nearly the same thing, self applause, is erecting a fabric which can never rest on such supports, and he will be found in fact to have been pulling down with one hand what he was endeavouring to build up with the other.

To draw to a conclusion. This doctrine abounds with the noblest practical uses, and points out directly the great rule of life, and source of happiness; which is to give ourselves wholly up to some employment which may, if possible, engage all our faculties, and which tends to the good of society. This is a field which is open to the exertion of all human powers, and in which all mankind may be equally, mutually, and boundlessly happy.

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THIS will render all expedients to kill time unnecessary. With our affections and our faculties thus engrossed by a worthy object, we scarce need fear being ever dull, pensive, or melancholy, or know what it is to have our time hang heavy upon our hands. And I think I may so far presume upon the known connection of mind and body, as to say that this is the best preservative against hypochondriacal disorders, to which persons whose situation in the world doth not lead them into the active scenes of life are peculiarly subject. Every day passed in the steady and earnest discharge of a man's known duty will pass with uniform chearfulness and alacrity. And in the glorious animating prospect of a future happy state of mankind, on which, in a humble trust and confidence in the assistance and grace of **GOD**, he has spent all his cares, and exerted all his powers, that joy will spring up in his heart here, which will hereafter be unspeakable and full of glory.

IF troubles and persecution arise on account of our adhering to our duty; **if** we be opposed in the prosecution of laudable undertakings, or suffer in consequence of undertaking them; the true piety of a person who habitually lives to **GOD** and not to himself is capable of converting them all into pure unmixed joy and transport. Then the human mind, roused to the most intense exertion of all its faculties, burdened with no consciousness of guilt, referring itself absolutely to the disposal of its **GOD** and father, distrusting its own powers, and confiding in the infinite power, wisdom and goodness of **GOD**, acquires a fervour of spirit, a courage, fortitude, and magnanimity, tempered with the
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most perfect serenity and the greatest presence of mind, which is sufficient, and more than sufficient, to bear a man through every difficulty, and even to convert all pain into pleasure. His highly agitated state of mind, in those trying circumstances, is almost pure rapture and extasy.

IN those circumstances, which appear so distressing, numbers, I doubt not, have been able, according to our blessed Saviour's direction, to rejoice and be exceeding glad, knowing that their reward was great in heaven; and have experienced more real comfort, peace of mind, and inward joy in the greatest adversity, than they had ever felt in the days of their prosperity. Yea what is related by historians of some christian and protestant martyrs appears to me not incredible; namely, that in the midst of flames they have felt no pain. Their minds were so intensely agitated and wholly occupied with opposite sensations, of the most exalted nature, as to exclude all external sensation whatever, vastly more than we can form any idea of from the trances and reveries which any person was ever subject to.

WHAT the extraordinary exercises of devotion are able to do upon extraordinary occasions, the habitual moderate exercise of piety will be able to do in the ordinary course, and the common troubles of our lives; so that it may not only be compared to a strong cordial, to be applied when the mind is ready to faint under adversity, but to that food which is the daily support of our lives.

To have GOD always in our thoughts is not possible in this world. Present objects, to the influence of which we are continually exposed, must necessarily

necessarily engage a great part of our attention ; and worldly objects, by continually engrossing our thoughts, are apt to become of too great importance to us. We grow anxious about them, and our minds are harassed and fatigued with a constant and close attention to them. Now, it is when the mind is in this state, or rather tending towards it, that the benign influences of devotion are, in the ordinary course of our lives, the most sensibly felt; when the mind, looking off, and above all worldly objects, and deeply impressed with a sense of the infinite power, wisdom and goodness of God, unburdens itself of every anxiety, and casts all its care upon its heavenly father; and when the preceeding tumult and disorder in the passions only serves to augment that unspeakable joy, satisfaction, and confidence, with which a deep sense of the presence and providence of God inspires the soul.

THE relief a benevolent mind feels from communicating its troubles and cares to an intimate friend, in whose wisdom and integrity he can confide, though of the same nature, is but a faint image of what the truly pious soul feels in the delightful seasons of the devout intercourse which he maintains with his God.

THIS is a perpetual source of joy and satisfaction to a truly devout mind which the wicked, those persons who live to themselves, and not to mankind or to God, intermeddle not with. Not even an idea of that sweet tranquility, exalted joy, and calm fortitude which true devotion inspires can be communicated to another who hath had no experience of it himself. This is truly of those things which St. Paul says *the natural man cannot comprehend,*

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and that they are foolishness to him, because they are spiritually discerned.

I WOULD be no advocate for enthusiasm. The fervour of devotion cannot always be kept up. That is inconsistent with the condition of our nature, and far from being necessary in our present state: but that chearful serenity and composure in which moderate acts of devotion leave the mind is an excellent temper for entering upon, and persevering with spirit and alacrity in any useful and honourable undertaking.

THE sum of this practical doctrine, suggested by revelation, and confirmed by reason and observation is, that NO MAN CAN BE HAPPY WHO LIVES TO HIMSELF: BUT THAT TRUE HAPPINESS CONSISTS IN HAVING OUR FACULTIES WHOLLY ENGROSSED BY SOME WORTHY OBJECT, IN THE PURSUIT OF WHICH THE STRONGEST AND BEST OF OUR AFFECTIONS HAVE THEIR FULL PLAY, AND IN WHICH WE ENJOY ALL THE CONSISTENT PLEASURES OF OUR WHOLE NATURE: that though a regard to our greatest happiness be of excellent use, particularly about the beginning of our progress towards perfection and happiness, in bringing our inferior appetites and passions into due subjection to the superiour powers of our nature, yet that self-love, and a regard to ourselves is very apt to grow too intense, and is in fact the cause of a great deal of the useless anxiety, perplexity, and misery there is in the world; and that therefore it ought to be our care that our minds be engrossed as much as possible by other objects; and that even motives to virtue which turn our attention frequently upon ourselves

ourselves should be used with caution; for fear of feeding that vanity and self-conceit which we ought to study every method of repressing, as the greatest bane of true religion, being most opposite to the genuine temper of christianity, and the most destructive of human happiness.

I CANNOT make a better application of this general maxim of conduct, namely to propose to ourselves, and, in the language of Solomon *to pursue with all our might* some worthy object, some honourable and useful employment, especially in the present circumstances of things among us, that in encouraging you, my brethren in the ministry, to prosecute with vigour that excellent scheme in which you have already shown so much laudable zeal, and have made so successful a progress. I need not add, that I mean the scheme of a provision for the more comfortable support of ministers' widows and orphans.

THIS particular subject has the easiest and happiest connection imaginable with the general one I have been discussing; as it is both a worthy and benevolent undertaking itself, and is designed for the relief of those persons who have shown themselves to be actuated by the same excellent sentiments; of persons who have not lived to themselves, but to society; who have entered into the social connections of life, and who have exposed themselves and families to peculiar hardships in consequence of those honourable connections.

IF any set of duties shine with peculiar lustre and make a greater figure than the rest in our holy religion, they are those of humanity and compassion. Through all the books both of the old and new testament, they are the most frequently, and the most earnestly inculcated of any particular duties: doubtless, because they are of the strongest obligation in themselves, the finest exercise for our faculties (having the greatest tendency to advance the perfection of our nature) and the best adapted to promote the ease and happiness of mankind in general.

THE DIVINE BEING himself is always represented as taking particular notice of the treatment which the poor and distressed meet with. He hath stiled himself the father of the fatherless, and the widows' God: and therefore when we undertake those humane and kind offices, we may, with more propriety than when acting in any other sphere, consider ourselves as acting the glorious part of God's deputies, and as stewards of the divine grace and goodness here below.

AND if we be obliged to contribute of our substance to the relief of the distressed, much more is it incumbent upon us not to withhold our labour and our interest, in the prosecution of proper schemes for their relief. And the method in which it is proposed to relieve the distressed persons we have now under consideration is one that is quite free from all the difficulties which lie in the way of common charities (though the objections to common charities have no weight in this particular case) and a method which is, in all cases, the most eligible, when it can be pursued with effect; namely

ly to put those persons whose circumstances are distressing, or liable to be so, in the way of relieving themselves. It is to exert our humanity in the way of encouraging, if not industry, at least frugality.

THIS, consequently, is a method which will relieve the minds of the distressed of a burthen which is often less tolerable than most kinds of calamity, namely the sense of dependance and obligation. It may be a false kind of delicacy which makes some persons so extremely sensible upon these occasions; but it is a sensibility which only the most amiable and deserving persons are subject to; and there is certainly a peculiar propriety in attending to this circumstance in the case before us.

WHO are, generally, the unhappy widows whose case we are now considering, but persons who have been brought up in easy and genteel circumstances, and whose small fortunes, joined to the income of their husbands, and managed with great frugality, have been just sufficient to bring up a family in that decent and reputable manner, in which a regard their station in life, and to the congregations in whose service their husbands were engaged, are universally acknowledged to require. These unhappy persons, therefore, are reduced at once, upon the death of their husbands, and the great reduction, if not total ceasing of their incomes, which is the immediate consequence of that event, to one of the most distressing situations that can occur in human life.

HERE is to be seen the deepest affliction for the loss of that companion and friend for whose sake they had sacrificed perhaps better prospects,
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and in situations in which it would have been more in their power, to support themselves and their families in the like circumstances; the greatest indigence, to which they have never been accustomed, which they are therefore wholly unprepared to encounter with, and which in their time of life they are utterly incapable of remedying; and all this joined with that generosity of sentiment, inspired by their education, and cherished by the company and acquaintance they have always kept up, to which relief itself is distressing, unless conferred with the greatest prudence and delicacy.

To augment the distress of these disconsolate widows, they see nothing before them but a number of children, educated in the same decent and frugal manner in which their parents were obliged to live, with expectations (if they be of an age capable of having any) almost unavoidably above their rank and fortune, wholly unprovided for, and destitute, in a great measure, of their fathers interest and friendships, on which were founded all their expectations of being introduced with tolerable prospects into the world.

HERE then, my brethren, are the worthiest objects of charity, and here is the most unexceptionable and desirable method of bestowing it; so that no circumstance seems wanting to engage every benevolent and publick spirited person to join heartily in a scheme which is calculated for so excellent a purpose.

CONSIDER, my brethren, how many worthy persons are anxious about the prudence and the vigour of your present resolutions, with what tender and heart-piercing concern the worthy and pious parent

rent regards the wife of his bosom and the children of his love, when he feels the symptoms of his own declining nature, and dreads to communicate the alarming intelligence; and how earnestly he wishes it may be in his power to do something, while living, which, when he is dead, may be the means of providing a small substitute for the fruit of his present labours, when alas, no substitute can be provided for himself, for his advice, his instructions, his consolations, the charms of his conversation, and all his personal kind offices. Of what a load of anxiety and distress, which tends to hasten the dreaded event, would this scheme ease the worthy and the most considerate of human minds.

CONSIDER also how many persons, the best qualified to bear their parts with propriety and honour in social life, and to exhibit the finest example of the several relative and domestic duties to others, and who are thereby capable of having their own usefulness greatly extended, are restrained from engaging in social connections by that peculiar tenderness and humanity, which a liberal education, and a life devoted to the service of a benevolent religion inspires; and also by that very prudence, which would eminently contribute to their fulfilling the most important duties of it in the most exemplary manner.

So excellent an undertaking, my brethren, will doubtless be its own sufficient reward; and if *the fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*, what good may you not reasonably expect that the devout blessings and fervent prayers of the many excellent persons interested in your present resolutions will procure you, from that God *who*
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is able to make all grace abound towards you, and to supply all your wants, out of his abundant fulness in Christ Jesus.

LET us then, my brethren, be *stedfast and unmoveable* in this, as well as *always abounding in every good work*; for as much as we know, that *our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.*



F I N I S.



The RULES of an ASSOCIATION for the Relief
of the WIDOWS and CHILDREN of PROTES-
TANT DISSENTING MINISTERS in the Coun-
ties of *Lancaster* and *Chester*; and of INDIGENT
MINISTERS, Members of this ASSOCIATION.

C H A P. I.

Method of raising and supporting a Fund for the said Purposes.

THIS FUND shall be raised and supported by SUBSCRIPTIONS and BENEFACTIONS.

1. **A** NNUAL subscriptions shall be paid by Protestant Dissenting Ministers in the Counties of *Lancaster* and *Chester*, who approve the design, according to the following rates, viz. one guinea and a half, two guineas, two guineas and a half, and three guineas.

2. Every minister to be admitted into the association shall enter on such a rate, as shall be agreeable to the majority of the subscribers and benefactors, at a general meeting; provided he be not obliged to enter on a higher rate than he himself chuses.

3. A minister, chusing hereafter to advance his rate, may be admitted so to do, if it be approved by the majority as before; and he pay the difference between the rates, with interest, from his first entering the society.

4. The sums paid to the society for the four first years, and in every succeeding year the surplus, after all disbursements made, shall be employed to raise a capital under the restrictions hereafter mentioned.

5. The subscriptions shall be due and payable to the treasurer at each annual meeting, *per* advance for the year to come, who is also to receive all benefactions, legacies, and collections.

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C H A P.

C H A P. II.

The Rules of Admission into this Association.

1. **I**F any ministers within these counties shall omit joining this association at its commencement, but shall within four years propose themselves; in such case they may be admitted upon paying a sum of money, with interest, equal to what they would have paid, had they joined the association at the first; and after the expiration of four Years, they shall be incapable of being admitted: nevertheless any person entering the ministry may, upon application, be admitted into the association, on the same terms on which others were at the beginning.

2. Any ministers hereafter coming to settle in these counties; and ministers in other counties, may be admitted on reasonable terms.

3. Every minister, who is a subscriber to the fund, and any person who gives five guineas, or one guinea annually, may be admitted into any offices of the society, and have a vote at the general meetings.

4. Congregations chusing to be interested in this association, and paying a sum annually, equal to any of the rates before-mentioned, shall have the liberty of chusing a representative capable of attending, and giving a vote at the general meetings, and of being chosen into any office relative to the fund; and such advantages shall thereby be obtained to their present and succeeding ministers and their families, as the state of the fund will admit.

C H A P. III.

The Purposes to which the Fund is to be applied.

1. **T**O defray the expence of carrying the scheme into execution, in which the greatest œconomy shall be observed, and which expence, except on very extraordinary occasions, will be inconsiderable.

2 To raise a capital stock to be lent out on government or other good security, and the interest, together with all sums

fums received to be applied to the purposes of the association, provided the capital never exceed forty pounds for each minister, who is a subscriber to the fund.

3. To pay annuities to the widows of ministers, in proportion to the rates paid by their husbands, *viz* for one guinea and half, six pounds; for two guineas, eight pounds; for two guineas and half, ten pounds; and for three guineas, twelve pounds *per annum*, during widow-hood; the annuities to commence from any of the quarter days next ensuing, after the decease of their husbands, *viz*. *March 25, June 24, September 29, and December 25*; and what is due shall be paid the first twenty-fourth of *June* that shall happen one full quarter after the death of their husbands: nevertheless all arrears, and a sum that will make what the husband has paid equal to four years annuity, shall be deducted; never deducting more than half the annuity in any one year.

4. If a minister leave no widow, but a son or daughter, or sons and daughters, he, she, or they, shall be intitled to a sum equal to five years annuity, to be equally divided among them, payable at the first general meeting which shall happen one full year after his, her, or their father's death, under the restriction of the foregoing article: which sum it is proposed to increase, as the state of the fund will admit; but it shall never exceed the amount of ten years annuity.

5. If a minister die before the expiration of four years after his entering into this society, his widow, on continuing the rate, until the four years be expired, shall be intitled to her annuity, under the restrictions of the third article of this chapter; and the same in the case of children.

6. If a widow marry or die before the elapse of five years from the commencement of her annuity, a sum of money shall be paid at the first general meeting that shall happen one full year after marriage or death, to her late husband's son or daughter, or sons and daughters, which, together with what she had received, shall amount to five year's annuity, subject to the restrictions of the third, and capable of the increase proposed in the fourth article of this chapter:

ter : and in case the children be under the age of twenty-one years, the sum, they are hereby intitled to, shall be paid into the hands of two persons chosen by the society, who shall be thought most likely to dispose of it to the greatest advantage of the children.

7. A minister's widow shall notify the day of her husband's death under the hands of two of the subscribers, or two protestant dissenting ministers, to the secretary or treasurer of the fund, within one month after her husband's decease ; in which case her annuity shall commence at the first quarter day after his decease ; which if she neglect, it shall commence the first quarter day after her notification : she shall also yearly, in the month of *June*, before the general meeting, notify her widow-hood in like manner : the same also shall be done in the case of children who have any demand upon the fund.

8. If the fund be enlarged so as to admit of any charitable distributions, the surplus shall be employed, not to augment the annuities of widows or the portions of children in general, except as in the fourth and sixth articles of this chapter ; but to relieve the more necessitous ministers, their widows or children interested in the fund, at the discretion of the subscribers ; notice being given to all persons related to the fund of an intended charitable distribution, that an application may be made to the treasurer or secretary, attested by two subscribers, or two protestant dissenting ministers.

9. If by any means this association should be dissolved, and any surplus remain after the annuities and portions then coming due are paid ; in such case a majority of all the members of the society present at a general meeting, to be called by the trustees for that purpose, are empowered to apply it to such uses as they judge most just and charitable.

C H A P. IV.

The Regulations to be observed in the Management of the Fund.

1. **T**HAT subscribers neglecting to pay their rates for three years together, with the interest for all sums in arrear, immediately on the neglect of the third payment,

payment, shall forfeit all their former subscriptions, and all future interest in the fund; and if they die before such forfeiture be incurred, all arrears, with interest, be deducted out of their widow's annuities or children's portions.

2. That the sentiments of the subscribers and benefactors on all occasions of voting be taken by ballot, and that the majority determine in all cases, except as excepted in the eight article of this chapter.

3. That a president, treasurer, and secretary be chosen every year by the subscribers and benefactors at their general meeting; at which time a committee, consisting of the president, treasurer, and secretary, and nine subscribers or benefactors, be chosen to transact business, during the intervals of the general meetings, who may be called together at the discretion of the president, five of whom shall have power to act.

4. That the treasurer on no occasion pay money without a written order signed by the secretary, and four others of the committee.

5. That five trustees be chosen by a general meeting, to whom all securities shall be made in trust for the uses of the fund.

6. That the president lay before the subscribers at every general meeting the consultations and transactions of the committee's meetings relative to the fund.

7. That the treasurer and secretary lay their books and accounts before the subscribers at every general meeting; and make a report of the state of the fund at least every three years, which shall be sent to every subscriber and benefactor.

8. That new regulations may be made by two thirds of the subscribers and benefactors at any general meeting; provided they be first proposed at a general meeting, and not confirmed until a subsequent one; provided also, that the annuities payable to widows actually on the fund, and portions then coming due to children, be liable to no diminution.

9. That all payments be made without fee or perquisite.

New



New Regulations, which have been proposed, in order to be confirmed at the next general Meeting, to be held, with all the future general Meetings, at WARRINGTON, every third Tuesday in June.

THAT a subscriber may limit his interest in the fund to any one or more of his children, declaring, by will or otherwise, in what manner he would have it done.

That no vote by proxy be admitted, unless the person thus voting shall signify to the society whom he has appointed to vote for him, and in what case.

That when the number of the trustees shall be reduced to three, the society shall, at their next general meeting, appoint others to fill up the usual number.

O F F I C E R S.

PRESIDENT. The Rev. Mr. MOTTERSHEAD of *Manchester.*

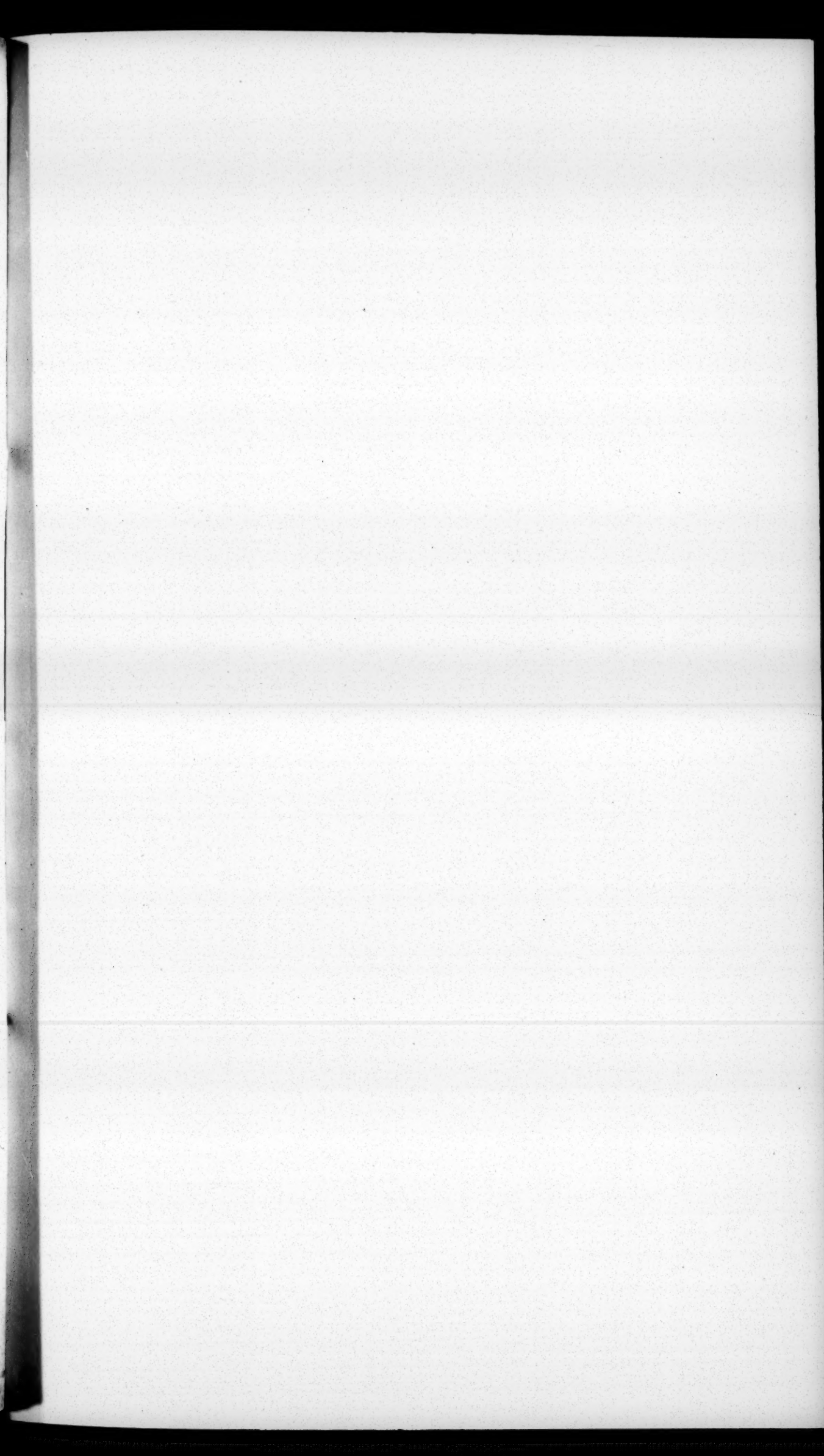
TREASURER. Mr. JEFFREY HART of *Warrington.*

SECRETARY. The Rev. Mr. SEDDON of *Warrington.*

TRUSTEES. { Mr. DIGGLES of *Manchester.*
Rev. Mr. MOTTERSHEAD of *Do.*
Rev. Mr. BRADDOCK of *Bury.*
Rev. Mr. SEDDON of *Warrington.*
Rev. Mr. GODWIN of *Gataker.*

COMMITTEE, { Rev. Mr. AIKIN of *Warrington.*
besides the Rev. Mr. HOLT of *Do.*
standing Rev. Mr. PRIESTLEY of *Do.*
Members. Rev. Mr. LORD of *Knutsford.*
Rev. Mr. GODWIN of *Gataker.*
Rev. Mr. DAVENPORT of *Chowbent.*
Rev. Mr. HOLLAND of *Bolton.*
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